



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012  
(213) 974-1101  
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA  
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors  
GLORIA MOLINA  
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY  
Third District

DON KNABE  
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH  
Fifth District

June 1, 2011

To: Mayor Michael D. Antonovich  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe  
Supervisor Gloria Molina

From: William T Fujioka  
Chief Executive Officer

## FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S INDEX STATUS REPORT

On April 27, 2010, your Board directed the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in consultation with the Chief Information Office (CIO), County Counsel, and other County departments currently exploring information sharing initiatives to: (a) examine other interagency information sharing systems nationwide, and determine what, if any, best practices could legally be integrated into the Family and Children Index (FCI) system including cost, and report back in 60 days; and (b) track and report back preliminarily in six months with a final report in 12 months on the overall efficacy of FCI, including the following issues: (i) quality of information, including assessment of FCI import barriers; (ii) level of usage by County staff; and (iii) ability of the leadership in Los Angeles County departments which participate in FCI to ensure usage compliance, as well as timely response to inquiries initiated as a result of searches in FCI which revealed prior contact(s) by various County departments.

Your Board received the preliminary six month report on November 18, 2010, which provided an update on progress made by the FCI Managers Team<sup>1</sup> (Team) to implement your Board's directive to ensure the full utilization of FCI.

<sup>1</sup>The Team includes: CEO, CIO, County Counsel, the Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN), Internal Services Department (ISD) and representatives from the nine participating FCI agencies.

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"*

**Please Conserve Paper – This Document and Copies are Two-Sided  
Intra-County Correspondence Sent Electronically Only**

This status report will serve as our final FCI update. The report is divided into two parts: Part I highlights major operational and technical accomplishments achieved since our previous update and describes the process that led to the successful implementation of the Communications Log<sup>2</sup> (CommLog). Part II assesses the efficacy of FCI mainly through reports summarizing its use as defined by queries conducted; number of records uploaded; use of the CommLog to request and exchange information between participating agencies; and feedback received from staff that participated in the two CommLog pilots and its subsequent rollout.

The report concludes with a series of recommendations developed by the Team designed to make FCI an even more useful County tool for Children's Social Workers (CSWs) and other agency staff engaged in the identification, prevention, management and treatment of child abuse and neglect.

## **BACKGROUND**

FCI is the name given to the Los Angeles County custom application authorized by California Welfare and Institutions Code Section 18961.5. The statute allows children services, health services, law enforcement, mental health services, probation, schools, and social services agencies within counties to share specific information about families who have had relevant contacts with these agencies and who have been identified as being at risk for child abuse or neglect. The statute requires that each county develop their own "at-risk" definition.

The application can only store specific information as allowed by law. It does so by receiving data from participating agency databases using a set of agency specific at-risk indicators that conform to the County's overall "at-risk" definition. As described in the August 11, 2010 FCI Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), each agency uses their at-risk indicators as a filter to identify relevant cases. Once these cases are identified, legally allowable information is electronically imported into FCI.

Serving as a "pointer" system, FCI directs authorized users of participating agencies to other participating agencies who had contact with the family subject to an initial search and match made through the application. Once users are pointed to other agencies, the statute requires that confidential, protected health, substantive information about a family be shared through the formation of Multidisciplinary Teams (MDT), unless some other legally permissible way to share that information already exists.

---

<sup>2</sup> The CommLog automatically tracks the request and exchange of information among participating FCI agencies, including: (1) when requests for information from agencies are initiated; (2) the timeliness by which agencies respond to these requests; and (3) to the extent possible, the type of information shared by agencies.

## PART I: IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

### OPERATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS

Below are highlights of major accomplishments achieved by the Team since our last update. Also included are next steps for completing any remaining commitments for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-11.

| Date              | Description   |
|-------------------|---|
| December 16, 2010 | The CEO and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) conducted their final joint <i>FCI Overview</i> presentation to the last remaining DCFS Regional Office.  |
| March 9, 2011     | The Team finalized the FCI Information Sharing Guide (Guide). The Guide details the at-risk Indicators for each of the nine participating agencies and the type of and manner in which information will be exchanged with each other. The Guide was distributed to staff and posted on FCI. |
| May 11, 2011      | Department of Health Services (DHS) Medical Hub Administrators and Directors were trained on FCI.   |
| NEXT STEPS        |   |
| By May 31, 2011   | The Department of Mental Health (DMH), in consultation with County Counsel and the CEO, will implement a new policy describing how mental health history, including episodes of psychiatric hospitalizations for parents and/or caregivers, will be shared with other FCI agencies.         |
|                   | The CEO, in consultation with County Counsel and Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN), will execute a new FCI MOU with the Department of the Coroner (DOC). The DOC will become the tenth participating FCI agency.  |
| By June 27, 2011  | All Coroner staff participating in FCI will be trained.   |
| By June 30, 2011  | The DOC is scheduled to upload its first set of records into FCI.   |
|                   | Based on an analysis of DHS data uploads and feedback from FCI users, the CEO and ICAN will convene a meeting to explore the feasibility of capturing additional data and integrating private hospitals into FCI.   |
|                   | Additional DHS staff identified by Medical Hub Administrators and Directors as FCI participants will be trained.  |

## TECHNICAL ENHANCEMENTS

The Internal Services Department (ISD) (with support from Team members) implemented a series of technical enhancements that resulted in the successful Countywide rollout of the CommLog on May 4, 2011. The rollout of the CommLog was completed on budget and nearly a month ahead of schedule.

| Date                                | Description   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| December 16, 2010                   | The Probation Department uploaded the first set of conviction codes for adult records into FCI. The records date back to August 2010.   |
| January 13, 2011                    | Completed training of all staff participating in the CommLog Pilot (Pilot).   |
| January 14, 2011                    | ISD and DCFS' Bureau of Information System completed a technical solution for automatically identifying and routing all CommLog requests/responses to CSWs as soon as they are assigned to a case.<br>ISD completed the creation of department-specific FCI email accounts. |
| January 18, 2011 – January 31, 2011 | The Pilot was launched. Several Emergency Response (ER) Units from each of the Glendora and Lakewood Regional Offices participated. Following the end of the Pilot, all Units were transitioned permanently to using the CommLog.   |
| February 28, 2011                   | ISD completed all needed changes to the CommLog that addressed issues identified during the Pilot. ISD began work on additional tools for Countywide rollout (e.g., training videos, email notifications, and revised agency protocols).                                    |
| March 22, 2011                      | The CEO and DCFS conducted a demonstration of the CommLog to the Service Employee International Union (that was well received).   |
| April 19, 2011 – May 2, 2011        | Second CommLog Pilot launched to test readiness for Countywide rollout. All Lakewood and Glendora Regional Office ER Units participated.  |
| May 4, 2011                         | ISD and DCFS completed all remaining technical changes to the CommLog identified during the Second Pilot. The CEO gave approval for Countywide launch.  |

## PART II: FCI ASSESSMENT

FCI continues to provide vital information to CSWs and other agencies engaged in the identification, prevention, management and treatment of child abuse or neglect. To assess the efficacy of FCI, this section contains analysis of reports describing the

number of queries made by participating agencies; number of new records uploaded; CommLog activities related to the request and exchange of information; and results from a web-based survey distributed to staff that participated in both Pilots.

## FCI DATA QUERIES

As detailed in Table 1, between January 1, 2011 and April 30, 2011, a total of 121,882 FCI queries were made by the nine FCI participating agencies. A total of 118,270 queries or 97 percent of all queries were conducted by DCFS. All other agencies combined accounted for a total of 3,612 queries or three percent of all queries made.

**TABLE 1: FCI QUERIES CONDUCTED BY AGENCY**  
JANUARY 1, 2011 – APRIL 30, 2011

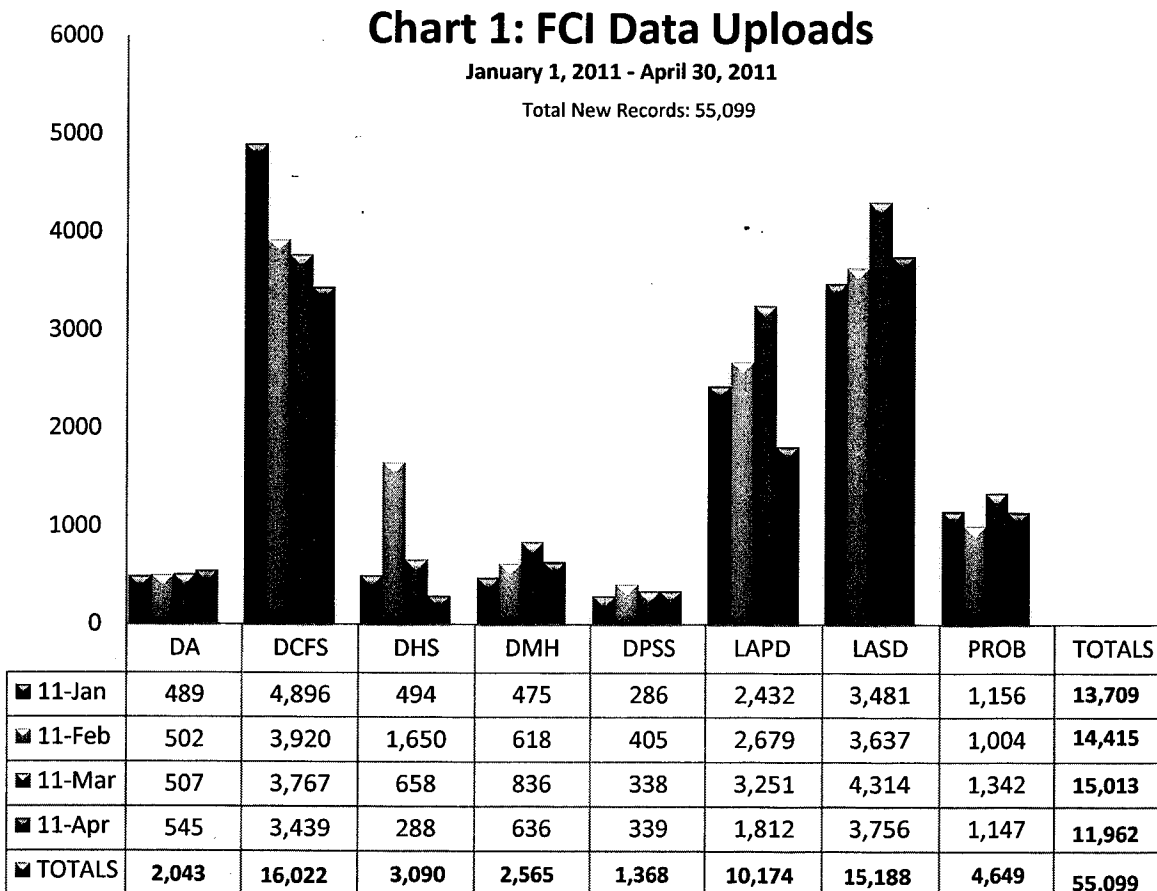
|               | DA         | DCFS           | DHS       | DMH      | DPH       | DPSS      | LAPD       | LASD         | PROB       | Monthly Totals |
|---------------|------------|----------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------|--------------|------------|----------------|
| Jan           | 184        | 27,805         | 8         | 5        | 11        | 13        | 30         | 558          | 22         | 28,636         |
| Feb           | 204        | 27,129         | 25        | 0        | 23        | 8         | 65         | 556          | 16         | 28,026         |
| Mar           | 245        | 32,822         | 15        | 2        | 30        | 17        | 82         | 682          | 55         | 33,950         |
| Apr           | 144        | 30,514         | 17        | 0        | 19        | 13        | 26         | 507          | 30         | 31,270         |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>777</b> | <b>118,270</b> | <b>65</b> | <b>7</b> | <b>83</b> | <b>51</b> | <b>203</b> | <b>2,303</b> | <b>123</b> | <b>121,882</b> |

|       |                                       |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| DA:   | District Attorney                     |
| DCFS: | Dept. of Children and Family Services |
| DHS:  | Dept. of Health Services              |
| DMH:  | Dept. of Mental Health                |
| DPH:  | Dept. of Public Health                |
| DPSS: | Dept. of Public Social Services       |
| LAPD: | Los Angeles Police Department         |
| LASD: | Los Angeles Sheriff's Dept.           |
| PROB: | Probation                             |

## FCI DATA UPLOADS

Chart 1 indicates that between January 1, 2011 and April 30, 2011, a total of 55,099 *new* records were uploaded into FCI by participating agencies. Of these, the top three agencies that uploaded data were: DCFS: 16,022; LASD: 15,188; and LAPD: 10,174. DPH uploads do not appear in the chart because data from two participating programs, Nurse Family Partnership (NFP) and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD), were unavailable. NFP is in the process of migrating their data into a shared national NFP database while the STD program had no new records to upload during this period. There are over 2.5 million records in FCI.

It is also important to note that each agency uploads information consistently but on different schedules, ranging from daily uploads to monthly uploads. As a means of improving the information contained in FCI, the Team recommends exploring the feasibility of increasing the frequency of automated agency uploads into FCI.



## COMMLOG USAGE REPORTS

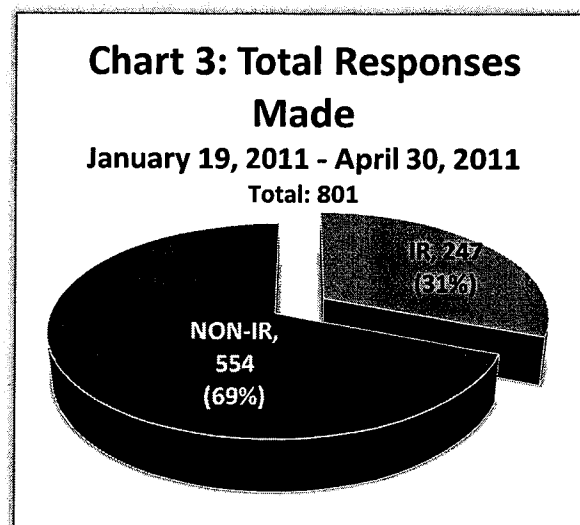
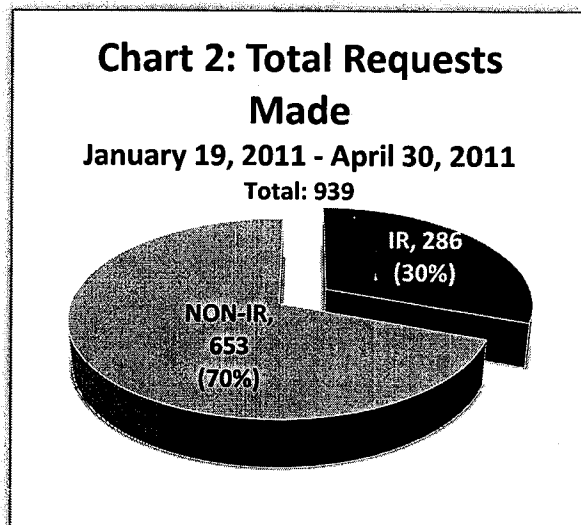
Below, Charts 2 and 3 summarize the type and number of responses received to requests made for information during the two CommLog Pilots (January 19, 2011 through April 30, 2011).

As can be seen from Chart 2: Total Requests Made, approximately 939 requests for information were made during this period. Of these requests, 286 (30 percent) were marked as "Immediate Response" or "IRs" by the requestor, which means that the agency receiving the request must respond to the request made immediately or no later than the next business day. Additionally, 653 (70 percent) requests were made as non-IRs, meaning that responding agencies have up to three business days to respond to requests.

As indicated in Chart 3: Total Responses Made, responding agencies provided 801 responses to requests made. Of these responses, 247 (31 percent) were provided in response to IR requests, while 554 (69 percent) were responses to non-IR requests. This represents an overall average response rate of 86 percent.

When comparing total responses (801) to total requests (939) there is a discrepancy of 138 unanswered requests. According to the CommLog reports this discrepancy can be explained in the following ways:

1. Six (6) requests were either waiting for a response or marked by the requestor as "completed" or "cancelled";
2. Thirty-eight (38) requests needed for the requestor to follow up with the information requested (e.g., form a MDT via a phone-call); and
3. Ninety-four (94) requests were automatically closed by the system either because the request was made in error or the requestor obtained the information via another source.



IR – Immediate Response  
Non-IR – Non- Immediate Response

## AVERAGE RESPONSE TIMES

To understand actual response times, data corresponding to the first week that the CommLog was implemented Countywide was reviewed. A total of 547 requests were analyzed. This analysis revealed the following average response times:

Total Average Response Time (All): 32 hours  
Total Average Response Time (IRs): 16 hours  
Total Average Response Time (Non-IRs): 38 hours

On average, the data shows that agencies are responding to requests made well within the timeframe outlined in the FCI MOU, which calls for responses to be made within three business days. However, the Team will continue to monitor these reports to ensure that response times, especially those involving IR requests, continue to improve. Part of this quality control process will involve conducting occasional surveys of users.

## COMMLOG PILOT USER SURVEYS

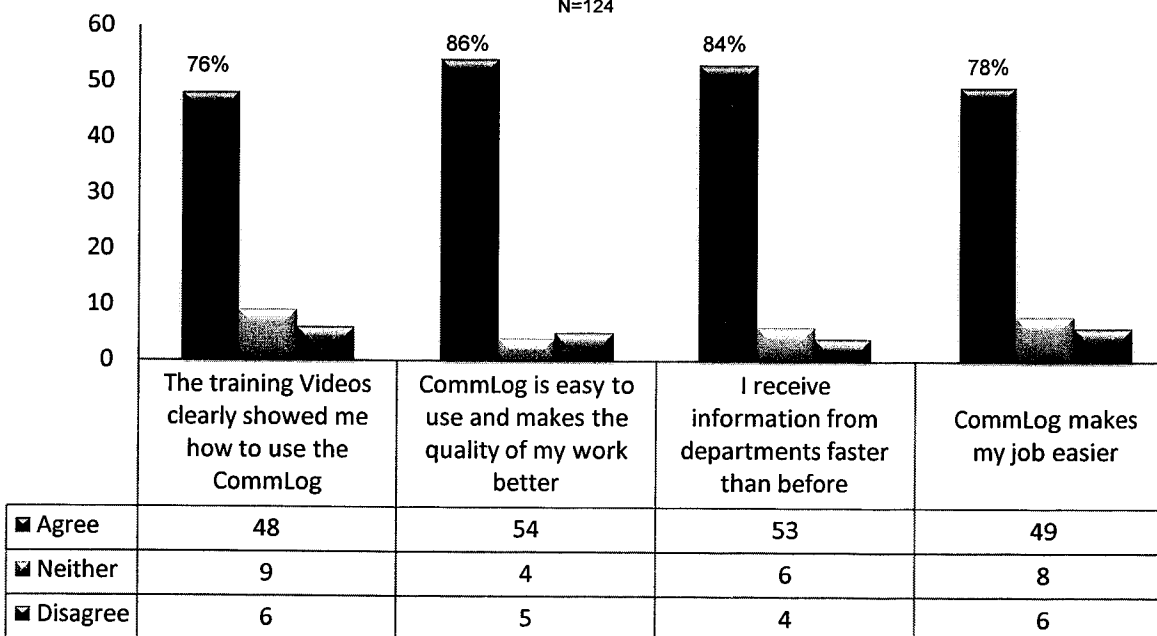
To further assess how well the CommLog was working, the CEO, in partnership with DCFS, administered a brief survey to users from the Lakewood and Glendora offices that participated in both Pilots. Out of 124 users surveyed, 63 users or 51 percent responded.

The findings of the survey, summarized in Chart 4 below, show that 76 percent of users felt that the online training videos clearly showed them how to use the CommLog; 86 percent felt that the CommLog was easy to use and improved the quality of their work; 84 percent felt that they received information faster than before; and 78 percent of users felt that the CommLog made their job easier.

**Chart 4: CommLog Survey Results**

January 19, 2011 - April 30, 2011

N=124





Below are excerpts of comments received from CommLog users via the Survey:

*"So much better than before! I get info much faster and I can keep better track of when I request things."*

*"It's great now that we are able to make a request electronically."*

*"This is a wonderful tool...it improves the quality of my work...."*

*"I love the new CommLog."*

*"The CommLog is very helpful and I found that the results come faster than before. I am glad this change was implemented."*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the work completed to date and feedback received from users, there are several additional enhancements that the Team would like to recommend for consideration. Implementation of these recommendations would make FCI an even more useful tool for CSWs and others engaged in the identification, prevention, management and treatment of child abuse or neglect. The recommendations, which could be implemented during FY 201-12, are summarized below.

| Recommendation                                | Description   |
|---|---|
| Maximize conviction information found in FCI. | In consultation with County Counsel and the DA, the CEO will conduct a multi-agency match using DA conviction records to supplement conviction information already being uploaded by Probation. |
| Enhance "up front" name matching.             | ISD, in consultation with the CIO, will improve the FCI name matching function at the time that data is uploaded.   |
| Explore automated uploads.                    | ISD and the CEO will work with agencies to determine the feasibility of automating near real-time uploads.  |
| Create a universal search screen for CSWs.    | ISD, CEO, and CIO will explore the feasibility of creating a universal search feature that allows CSWs to conduct simultaneous searches in FCI and other systems using a single entry screen.   |
| Increase non-County participation.            | In consultation with County Counsel, the Team will explore the feasibility of having other non-County agencies participate in FCI.  |
| Increase FCI server storage capacity.         | ISD will review their previous analysis regarding FCI server capacity to determine future data storage needs to account for increased participation, use, and CommLog traffic.                  |

Each Supervisor  
June 1, 2011  
Page 10

The Team will develop cost estimates for each recommendation and present them to your deputies for discussion no later than the end of September 2011.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Team has worked collaboratively to implement your Board's directive to fully implement FCI and enhance its effectiveness by CSWs and other FCI users. By building on the successes outlined in our November 18, 2010 report, the Team successfully launched the CommLog Countywide on May 4, 2011, ahead of schedule and on budget.

In addition, implementation of the recommendations outlined above would continue to build on the successes achieved to date and greatly increase the usefulness of FCI as a tool for identifying, preventing, managing and treating child abuse and neglect.

As this report is the final status report on FCI, we will continue to work with your deputies to keep your Board apprised of any developments as they arise. If you have any questions about this update, please contact me or your staff may contact Kathy House, Assistant Chief Executive Officer at (213) 974-4530, or via e-mail at [khhouse@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:khhouse@ceo.lacounty.gov).

WTF:KH:LB  
CP:GS:mh

c: Executive Office  
County Counsel  
Chief Information Officer  
Children and Family Services  
District Attorney  
Health Services  
Mental Health  
Probation  
Public Health  
Public Social Services  
Sheriff  
Interagency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect  
Los Angeles Police Department